

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-24 are all the claims pending in the application. In response to the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims define patentable subject matter.

I. Overview of the Office Action

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-12, 15, 17-20 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over McNabb et. al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,289,462, hereafter “McNabb”) in view of Hue et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0126845, hereafter “Hue”). Claims 5, 6, 13, 14, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over McNabb in view of Hue and further in view of Tashenberg (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0034711). Claims 8, 16, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over McNabb in view of Hue and further in view of Hepworth (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0032920, hereafter “Hepworth”). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

II. Analysis

The Examiner alleges that McNabb discloses all of the features of independent claim 1 and analogous independent claims 9 and 17 except for the feature “the data processing system

external to a classification engine". Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's position.

Claim 1 and analogous claims 9 and 17 recite in part:

receiving the request at the database, from the requestor, to access the contents of the classified table elements.

The Examiner cites FIG. 9 of McNabb as allegedly disclosing this feature of the claim.¹ However, Applicant respectfully submits that this feature of the claims is neither taught nor suggested by the cited reference.

The Examiner appears to read the claimed database on the Back-end Database Server (element 510 of FIG. 9 of McNabb). Column 14, lines 19-23 of McNabb clearly discloses that requests that are processed at the web server that need access to information in secured partitions are handled by the Security Gate, (element 504) and not directly by the database as required by the claim.

In McNabb, requests which have an original security level are received at the Security Gate which may be operating at a higher security level. Authorized requests may have their security levels modified in order to conform to the security level of the back end database. Accordingly, it appears that all requests by a user are always received by the Security Gate (504) and not by the database. McNabb discloses that when a user requests access to a resource behind

¹ Page 2 of the Office Action dated August 29, 2007.

the firewall, the system initially determines from the level originally assigned to the user, how to direct the request, and what processes it is permitted to initiate. The user may then be prompted that the information requested is unavailable if their level is not authorized (column 20, lines 20-28). This also shows that the request is received at the Security Gate and not at the database, since the user is not granted access to the database if their security level is not granted access to the database. This clearly differs from the claimed invention where requests are received at the database.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no teaching or suggestion in McNabb of the feature “for each classified table element, the database asking the classification engine to provide an indication of whether the requestor associated with the request is to be permitted access to the contents of the respective classified table element”, as recited in independent claim 1 and analogously required by independent claims 9 and 17.

The Examiner asserts:

[I]f request is forwarded to the database, it means that the access was granted, the database requires confirmed request in order to provide the access to the data, i.e. the database is asking for the identification information.²

Nowhere does McNabb disclose that the database asks the security gate for identification information. Applicant further notes that amended claim 1 defines the “asking step” as “sending the request by the database to the classification engine coupled to the data processing system”.

² Page 3 of the Office Action.

Additionally, “identification information” as known to one skilled in the art, does not equate to an indication of whether a requestor associated with a request is permitted to access the contents of the classified data elements as required by the claims. Further, although the forwarding of a request to the database may mean that access was granted, this does not mean that the database asked the security gate to provide an indication of whether the requestor associated with the request is to be permitted access to the contents of the alleged respective classified table element in database 510, as required by the claims. The Office Action at page 3 merely states that “the database requires confirmed request in order to provide the access to the data”, with citing to any support in the prior art. It is respectfully submitted that McNabb, alone or in combination with Hue does not teach this claimed feature.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no teaching or suggestion in the cited references that “the asking step comprises sending, by the database, arguments to input classification parameters to the classification engine coupled to the data processing system”, as recited in amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17.

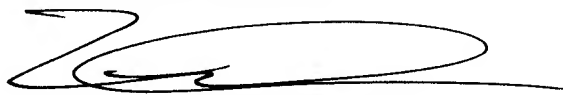
Hue does not cure the deficiencies of McNabb.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, and 17 should be allowable because the cited references do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims. Claims 2-8, 10-16, and 18-24 should also be allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on independent claims 1, 9, and 17.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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